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TWELVE PAGES.

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1900.

THE NEGRO AND ORGANIZED LABOR.

The refusal of the Virginia Federation of Labor, in session at Richmond, to admit a negro delegate, is a vastly more significant incident than it might appear to be at the first glance. Indeed, there lurks behind it a problem that in importance altogether dwarfs the problem of eliminating the negro as a political factor—the problem involving the future status of the negro as an industrial factor.

It is admitted on all sides that the South is entering upon a period of unparalleled industrial development that is bound to produce important and far-reaching changes in our population as now classified. Hitherto we have had in the South a much more simple organization of society than has obtained in the Northern and in many of the Western States. Labor has found employment mainly in agriculture and has presented no problem more serious than that of securing negroes enough to cultivate and gather the cotton crop. The poorer whites have been mostly tenant farmers, or, when day laborers, have worked side by side with the negroes in the fields, without complaint, and without feeling that this relation compelled any social equality of the races.

When the South has become a manufacturing section, as it is destined to do in a very few years, the complexion of things will be changed. We shall then have, to a certainty, organized labor, but the conditions presented will not be the same as in the North. What will be the attitude of organized labor toward the negro? Will he still be welcomed as a co-laborer, or will the unions decide to exclude him from the ranks of the skilled laborers? Without generalizing from the single instance cited above, the indications are that the negro will not be admitted to the labor unions and will therefore be excluded from those lines of industry controlled by union labor.

This will give the South a labor situation infinitely more complex and dangerous than has had to be met elsewhere. There will be in the South a large element of laborers excluded from the more remunerative lines of employment, and, therefore, a constant menace to those employed in those lines. Suppose that, when a strike occurs, employers should seek to replace white union laborers with negroes? We shall then have the usual labor trouble with the fierce element of race hatred added. If the employer succeeds in resuming operations with negro labor, it will be merely a question of time until skilled negro laborers will be in competition with skilled white laborers, with the superior efficiency of the latter offset by the ability of the former to live more frugally.

On the other hand, should the negro secure his share of the opportunities open to skilled labor from the first and organize unions of his own, will effective co-operation with white unions be possible? Experiments are already being made to test the efficiency of the negro as a cotton mill employee. Should the experiment succeed, other mills will be established, and operated by colored labor. This will be vastly easier than replacing white labor with colored labor in mills now operated by the former, but will mean competition none the less.

There are those who do not believe that the negro will be successful as a skilled laborer, and hold that the solution of this problem will be found in the gradual absorption of the white population in the arts, professions, manufactures, and the relegation of the negro to the production of raw mate-

rials in the fields of the South. As to this, time only can tell; but meanwhile, we shall hear a great deal more of the negro and organized labor.

A REVAMPED POLITICAL PARTY.

The recent action of the Republican party of Kentucky in convention assembled suggests a few observations as to the future of Republicanism in the South. They apply particularly to North Carolina, which is about to adopt an amendment to its Constitution that will have the effect of disfranchising the negro, and is therefore expected to serve many persons of superior intelligence, morality and patriotism in that State (who are now reluctantly affiliated with the Democratic party), with opportunity and occasion to place those high qualities at the service of the Republican party and, incidentally, of an anxious and impatient country. We would not be understood as loth to add our enthusiastic expectation that their going will endow the dry bones of Radicalism with robust health, nor would we withhold tears for the irreparable loss that Democracy would sustain in their exit. We desire only to humbly point out that political parties are refractory substances and, in one instance, difficult to reform, re-make and rejuvenate.

The incidents that have marked the attempt of the Republican party to govern in Kentucky are too recent and too revolting to need detailed rehearsal. Its acceptance of leaders ready-made at the hands of corporation attorneys, their elevation to office by bribery and intimidation, their attempt to drag the Legislature with the militia, their dastardly doing to death of Governor Goebel by hired assassins, and their present frantic search for an asylum from the law courts of their State—all these things are fresh in the public mind. What may be a matter of less common knowledge is that what is expected to transform the Republican party of this State into a splendid aggregation of pure and high-minded statesmen has already taken place in Kentucky when this astounding series of villainies was begun.

The negro has never cut any particular figure as a distinct menace in Kentucky. The State has never been in danger of "negro rule," nor has the threat of it been used to hold white men in the Democratic ranks against their will or their convictions. It has been Democratic on National issues, just as Maine has been Republican. In 1896 a large and influential element of the Democratic party went over, bag and baggage, to the Republican camp, in so much that the State's electoral vote was given to Mr. McKinley.

Did this addition of ex-Democratic patriots do for the Republican party in Kentucky what a like acquisition is expected to do in this State? The recent history of alleged government in that State is the all-sufficient and emphatic answer. What the party's leaders at Frankfort may have omitted in the way of violence and foolishness, its State convention has abundantly supplied. That sapient body endorsed the "patriotic course of Governor W. S. Taylor," presumably his scurrying around to avoid the Sheriff included, "and all of the other Republican State officers, who have fought and propose to fight to the end!" Having done this it elected Mr. Taylor a delegate to the National Convention, and thanked ex-Governor Bradley for appearing professionally for Taylor in the contest before the courts. Thus has that party formally and deliberately saddled itself with all the infamy of the crimes of individual members, and has lent its sanction to the ignominy of their cowardice.

Such is the Republican party of Kentucky, revamped with renegade Democrats. Whether it will be better in other States when subjected to a like process will appear when they, who are impatient to begin it, shall have been given an opportunity and a free hand.

A FEW FALLACIES.

Says the Petersburg Index-Appeal, speaking of Mr. Bryan:

"His theory that the price of wheat and the price of silver run on parallel lines, so that anything which injured the market value of silver must prove disastrous to the owners of land, was too wild for general acceptance, but, urged plausibly, it gave him thousands of votes in many agricultural States. Since 1896 we have had remarkably large crops of wheat, yet the price has remained high and has shown no regard whatever to the value of silver."

This is, indeed, a terrible indictment, the only trouble being that it is inaccurate in a few particulars. As it is a charge that has been repeated, over and over, in Republican newspapers and harangues, it is worth examining:

1. Mr. Bryan had no "theory" as to the price of wheat and the price of silver. It was a plain matter of comparison, the prices being obtainable from tables prepared by non-partisan statisticians of this and other countries.

2. Mr. Bryan nor anybody else contended that the "price of wheat and the price of silver" ran on parallel lines. Parallel lines are straight lines, and as there have been fluctuations in the price of wheat and the price of silver since the former was demonetized, neither can be represented by a straight line. Here, again, the contention was not Mr. Bryan's, but that of the statisticians who prepared charts showing graphically by means of broken lines, accurately drawn, that the downward trend of wheat and silver had been, broadly speaking, proportionate. Whatever the explanation, no in-

telligent man has ever thought of disputing the fact that there has been a remarkable coincidence, every year, in the fluctuations of wheat and silver. Mr. Bryan most certainly did not assert that a fall in the price of silver to-day would produce a like fall in the price of wheat to-morrow. He merely pointed out that statistics showed that the price of wheat had always followed a drop in the price of silver. A partial failure of the crop at home or abroad might force the price of wheat up, while the price of silver was going down, but when normal conditions were restored wheat declined in sympathy with silver.

3. Since 1896 we have not had "remarkably large crops of wheat." The crop of 1891 was larger than the crops of either 1896, 1897 or 1899. The crop of 1898 was remarkable, but in the same year the crop of corn was short 259,630,000 bushels, while the crops of barley, rye and buckwheat were short also. In the same year, however, the foreign crop of wheat was short and the United States was called on to make good the shortage, as was shown by the fact that our exports of wheat jumped from 375,372 bushels, in 1896-'97, to 1,466,223,253 in 1897-'98, being thereby nearly doubled. In 1898-'99 this tremendous foreign demand showed little abatement, since we sent abroad 139,432,815 bushels that year. In other words, the world's supply of grain fell off, while the demand for it increased, and the American wheat-grower has profited. The conditions have been abnormal and afford no ground for the careful observer to conclude that the contention really made by the bimetalists in 1896 was erroneous. We are sure that the Index-Appeal will see the point.

CARESSES THE HAND THAT SMOTE HIM.

Poor old John Sherman has been induced (after all that has come and gone) to say a word for the McKinley regime, and to predict its triumph at the polls in November. This is, of course, expected to help smooth the wrinkles from the Ohio situation, where some of the old time Republicans still resent the trick by which Sherman was induced to give up a seat in the Senate to become a member of the McKinley Cabinet, and was then brutally shoved out of that.

Sherman loyally does the best he can for the party chiefs who played him such a scurvy trick, but he is not wholly fortunate in his deliverances. Thus he says:

"The Republican party is not one of men, but of principles. I trust they may dominate the public policy of the nation for years to come. My political experience goes back over the entire life of the Republican party, and, as I look over the field, I find its principles and sphere of usefulness have been consistent throughout. It has been the party of the highest ideals and advance results in our political history."

Of course, the declaration that the "Republican party is not one of men, but of principles" is the merest banality, one that Sherman, in his more than a half century of public life, must have heard repeated easily an hundred times, and by the orators of every political party, and ephemeral apology for a party that has bobbed to the surface of our seething turmoil of politics. In all that time, however, it could not in any instance have been more grossly misapplied than to the Republican party of to-day, a gigantic organization that is the merest plaything of the men who control, finance and direct it as a close corporation.

Not more fortunate is the declaration that "its principles and sphere of usefulness have been consistent throughout." If this declaration be true, it constitutes an offense to one entire section of the country, which can but recall the fanaticism, hypocrisy and blind sectionalism that dominated it for so many years; if it be not true, then it were better left unsaid, since in any case it is liable to start comparisons which will be little enough to the credit of the Republican party.

In one respect the Republican party has been consistent enough—in its early days it justified its disregard of the Constitution by high-flown flap-doodle about "higher laws;" at present it is keeping up the lie nobly. The devil was never so fluent in scriptural quotation as is the Republican party in citing abstract and transcendental principles of morality in justification of a concrete and perfectly obvious rascality. In this, it has been consistent always, as it has been in pandering to the few and disregarding the interests of the many. The Republican party has been consistent in its hypocrisy. It has not been consistent in its fanaticism. It has changed from an anti-slavery to a pro-slavery party, if, indeed, it ever objected to slavery save as a pretext for getting the dollar.

In declaring that it has always been consistent, Sherman has paid his party a dubious compliment. Sundry wearers of stripes are at present applying for pardons, on the ground that they propose, for the future, to be inconsistent.

The gentlemen who drew the Cuban Postal Code, investing Director Rathbone with powers somewhat greater than those of the Czar, is a genius ahead of his time. In a few years his country may catch up with his advanced ideas, if it is continued under present auspices.

Ex-Secretary Alger sneers at General Miles because the latter did not get hit by a Spanish shell. For a gentleman with a court-martial-for-cowardice incident in his military record, this is rather risky toying with the glass-house warning.

Just at present the swiftest society function in St. Louis is the riot call.

The Boer commissioners were warmly received in Washington, and many distinguished men took part in the formal reception and speech-making. But neither Mr. McKinley nor any member of his official household graced the occasion. A box was reserved and tickets sent him by a special messenger, but the light of the Executive countenance refused to shine, even by the proxy of an underling, upon the anxious assembly. Doubtless the "great sympathy" that is asserted to be rending the McKinley bosom was too keen to bear acquaintance in public. The spectacle of tears coursing down the Presidential nose would have been too moving and pathetic. Mr. McKinley did well to stay at home and mourn the untoward fate of the poor Boers.

When Germany begins to protect its infant industries the exercise of that beneficent prerogative is characterized in American tariff organs as "hostile discrimination." The ownership of the ox is still the crucial test when going is in progress.

The New York correspondent of the Washington Post asserts that the McKinley enthusiasm in that State is already decidedly of the soggy order. It is a great pity that the Republican lunch-basket got caught in the rain before the picnic was fairly begun.

A stockholder of the Sugar Trust is trying, with the aid of a lawyer, to get a look at the yearly balance sheets of that concern. This is a cruel and cannibalistic move against a temporarily indisposed Octopus.

The "cigar-shaped" train having failed to lower the record, will now take its place in the limbo of the numerous "cigar-shaped" flying machines that refused to fly.

Kentucky can proceed to wrap a wet towel about its head and con over the bills of the several thousand rival militiamen who have spent the spring glaring at one another in Frankfort.

Maybe the vigorous prosecution of Mr. Charles F. W. Neely is inspired by thoughts of what might have happened had he been placed in charge of Mr. Hanna's barreling works in 1896.

No official information of the relief of Mafeking had reached England up to yesterday, but the inhabitants of the island are now in that happy state that needs no outside exhilaration.

The murder of an University of Pennsylvania professor by thugs on the streets of Philadelphia shows in another way how well governed that city is.

Director Rathbone might have endured the suspicion, but to be deprived of his salary will make the disgrace too painful to bear.

NOTES AND OPINIONS.

EXPLAINING IT.

(N. Y. Journal of Commerce.)
"Dun's Review" remarks that "business is not what it was a year ago." It is impossible that a rapid rate of increase should continue indefinitely. With increasing prices there must necessarily be a decline of demand. A remarkable feature of the present business expansion is that the demand has so long resisted the effect of advancing prices. With an abatement of demand there must be a decline of prices. A high estate of prosperity may last a considerable period, but an increasing state of prosperity must come to an end, and the more rapid its rate the sooner it is likely to terminate. A rise of prices must reach a limit and an increased demand for goods may continue indefinitely only if its rate does not outgrow population and means of consumption.

GOAT MASQUERADING AS MUTTON

(Chicago Record.)
Considering the uncertainty that attaches to almost all the articles of food that were once the product of the farm; remembering that butterine made from suet and other fats can hardly be distinguished from the legitimate product of the churn; that milk is sometimes a chemical conglomeration of chalk, water and formaldehyde, and that even eggs have been counterfeited so accurately that it may be a matter of only a few years before the henless egg will take its place in our vocabulary alongside of the hors d'oeuvres, it is not a reason for surprise to learn that the festive goat is now parading before the public gaze as the latest substitute for the fleecy and succulent lamb of former days.

On his own merits, perhaps, the goat, as an article of food, might not be wholly obnoxious to the every-day citizen who has no pretensions to be regarded as a gourmet; but unfortunately, owing to the tradition that the ordinary goat of commerce is not capable of passing any day of his life in comfort unless he has munched the posters off an acre or two of theatrical billboards and lunched upon half a hundredweight of rusty tomato cans and cast-off hoopskirts, the public has an idea that mutton made from the agile capricious must necessarily partake in texture and in flavor of the diet upon which he feeds.

THE NATURAL SEQUENCE.

(Newark Advertiser.)
The Cuban postal frauds are only a natural sequence to the frauds practiced in the war with Spain, all of which went unpunished. General Eagan was required on full pay. Secretary Alger held on till the last moment and resigned. And that was all. The jobbery and corruption of the war with Spain are quite forgotten now, but the occurrences in Cuba are a sharp reminder.

THE MODERN PLAGUE OF NOISE.

(Jacksonville Times-Union.)
To us it has often seemed that in sending plagues on Egypt the greatest of all was withheld in mercy from a suffering people—the first-born were slain and toads invaded the parlors, the kitchens and the diningrooms, but the Pharaoh's subjects were spared the distracting noises that only the Chinese can endure. The great cities of the

world have recognized in mere noise an enemy to civilization and effective nervous force—among the learned it is well known that noise may take from us the mental capacity of sustained effort, and the placidity which make sound thought and right conclusions possible. It is not the weak and the sick alone that may be driven into the grave by this worst of all plagues, but the tireless sweet restorer is forbidden to knit up the raveled slave of care and the business man is debarred the rest which can alone fit him for those labors of the next day, upon which depend his value to himself, his family and the community.

Shall we sacrifice sleep and peace that the cab may revel in the stir that advertises without a direct tax and the drayman lift up his pride as he goes thundering along as the Homeric heroes did, "wrapped in commotion and wonder as a garment?" Let us think of what we pay annually for a short trip in the hope of finding peace.

RATS AND THE PLAGUE.

(Savannah News.)
A Chicago doctor advises that the people of every city begin immediately a war of extermination against rats, in view of the appearance of the bubonic plague at San Francisco. Rats are said to be one of the most usual channels by which the germs of the plague are distributed, hence to get rid of the rats would be a preventive measure of great worth. It would be too late to wait until the disease had made its appearance before starting in to kill the rats, as a dead rat with the disease germ in its body is quite as dangerous as a live one. It is a mistake to suppose that the plague is a warm weather disease. It seems, indeed, to thrive best in cold and damp weather. The summer, therefore, is the time to take precautions against it.

To Our Advertisers.

The Virginian-Pilot is compelled to require that all advertisers desiring to change their advertisements in our Sunday edition furnish us with copy not later than 12 o'clock noon Fridays. No change of advertisement will be guaranteed in our Sunday paper if copy is sent later than this hour. This requirement is rendered necessary by the great increase in our advertising patronage for which we thank our patrons and trust that they will appreciate the fact that an early paper will be a mutual benefit to both our readers and advertisers.

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